

JUSTICE COMMITTEE MEETING
January 26, 2006
3:00 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

John Snyder, Chair
Dave Drobisch
Linda Little
Joe McGlaughlin
Karen Zaiz

COUNTY PERSONNEL PRESENT:

Sheriff Jerry Dawson
Jon Baxter, Public Defender
Randy Waks, Asst. State's Attorney
Jerry Lord, Public Building Commission
Amy Stockwell, Auditor
Don Meyer, Court Administrator
Lori Long, Probation

This meeting was called to order by Chair Snyder at the Macon County Office Building.

MINUTES

Motion made by Dave Drobisch to approve the minutes of December 29, 2005, seconded by Joe McGlaughlin, and motion carried with one abstention from Karen Zaiz.

CLAIMS

Motion made by Dave Drobisch to approve the claims, seconded by Joe McGlaughlin, and motion carried unanimously.

REPORTS

Court Services/Probation

Don Meyer said Sheriff Dawson will be reporting on the Justice Community Council. Chair Snyder commented he was happy to see the personnel line in probation taken care of, and Don Meyer reported the layoff notices have been rescinded.

Public Building Commission

Jerry Lord said renovation at the law enforcement center continues with the electronic phase going on now involving wiring throughout the facility. Most of the construction in trod 6 is complete; painting and floor work remain to be done. Integrator from Indianapolis is supplying the security control system and a demonstration was brought in of the control panels for the sheriff's department to review. One comment received back included changing labels on the cells which will be done with software, but otherwise it appears to be working well. Jerry said they are about 50% done as far as spending on the project, it is on schedule, and coordination seems to be working very well. On the second floor of the courts facility, that state's attorney has been moved from the west side to the east side to occupy the newly renovated space. Demolition work has started on the west side to get probation in, and the time frame should be shorter since construction is basically putting up partition walls and three interview rooms.

Regarding animal control, Jerry said they are shooting for the end of February for completion of the contract. It is coming along well, and Jerry invited anyone to call him if they wanted to tour it. The new water main is in and completed so they are in the finishing portion of the project. In response to a question from Chair Snyder, Jerry said they are on budget for the project.

Chair Snyder said he had seen in the paper where the city is in a dilemma over what they are going to do, and he asked Jerry if they had approached him. Jerry said they did the preliminary \$10,000 study with BLDD which was requested; BLDD came back and said the next phase is to look in detail instead of generalities in terms of space for offices and functionality and more money was needed. Jerry said the building commission has said the city needs to be picking up that tab so it is back in the city's hands. Chair Snyder said something needs to be worked out since it is questionable as to whether the county can afford the whole operation if the city goes out on its own. Jerry said county board members made a provision for that in the larger lease to acquire more space in the law enforcement center should something like that occur; right now it is a 20 month lease but in order for them to levy on anything new, a decision has to be made between now and the end of this year.

Public Defender

Jon Baxter said he discussed with a lobbyist the progress of the funding of the Public Defender Reimbursement Act and he lined up a representative and senator who introduced bills to fund the Public Defender Reimbursement Act. He and Julie Curry met with someone at OMB and the meeting apparently went well. Jon also sent letters to all public defenders interested in this, along with the resolution passed by the county board; he is preparing letters for local legislators in an effort to get it in the governor's budget. In response to a question from Dave Drobisch, this involves state money, not federal.

Karen Zaiz mentioned the Chamber is sponsoring Lobbying 101 on Monday, the 30th, and she can get information for anyone interested. Julie will be there along with a representative from our state house, state senate people, and the feds.

Sheriff Jerry Dawson

Sheriff Dawson said while the trod 6 expansion area mentioned by Jerry Lord may be completed, it will not be ready for its intended use until all the other upgrading is done which will probably be sometime in the fall. As each trod is taken down to put in new technology such as cameras and workstations, inmates will be put in the new area instead of using the rec area which has been used in the past. By late fall, it should be up and running with trod 6. A demonstration of the master control panel was seen and it seems to be fairly simple which reinforces the idea of using part time, non-correctional officers to man the station. Sheriff Dawson said he has spoken with the rep from the Fraternal Order of Police who represents the correctional officers and feels he will have a fight on his hands; the rep did say it could be brought up in a labor management committee which Sheriff Dawson intends to do in February or March. Going into the second year, around \$100,000 could be saved using part-time employees. There are a couple of areas where cameras are needed, but there are around 10 extra before additional funding will be looked at. Once the project is complete, it will save labor cost and he

is impressed with it.

Justice Committee members, along with all county board members, were encouraged to contact Sheriff Dawson or Jerry Lord to set up a tour time for 6 to 8 for accommodation purposes. As far as electronic control, Jerry Lord said it would not be installed to see what is going on until April and he felt April would be a better time to show everything. Chair Snyder said he would take it up after the first of April.

Sheriff Dawson requested a plaque presentation be on the February board agenda for Lt. John Anderson who is retiring with 27.5 years tomorrow; he will be on the books into February. He is the one who started the response team, has been the jail warden, patrol commander, in charge of training, and has done a very good job for Macon County. They have received papers on Deputy Mike Sheffield who is going in March. Sheriff Dawson said what he hoped would not happen is happening and it seems to be a domino effect since there is discussion from other deputies they may be going. Budget wise, he has to send people for 12 weeks to the Police Training Institute before an on the job training period which results in a hardship if there are any more back to back.

A Macon County Justice Council meeting was held last Friday, and two sub-committees have been formed. If everyone works hard, Sheriff Dawson feels they can do some good. The first was a jail study on who is in jail, for how long, and is it practical for pretrial release programs like home detention or home monitoring, and Don Meyer served on this. The other sub-committee is

re-entry since there are many parolees coming back to Macon County and there is not gainful employment for them. With Roger Walker being director of the prison system, it will be a benefit since he has the governor's ear and can help us get federal funding for parolee programs to keep them from returning to prison. As the council becomes more seasoned, additional problems will be taken on.

At the last Finance meeting, officeholder salaries were discussed; Sheriff Dawson said he has gotten some comparables with other counties which he will report to the Finance Committee.

An article was in the newspaper regarding Detective Jim Root seizing \$77,000 and 65% is kept after other people get their cut, but part of it is still pending. Sheriff Dawson said that fund has saved the taxpayers money. The Tahoe is used for the school resource officer to drive, and it is positive with the junior high and high school kids when they see it. They will continue to try and use things he seizes instead of using money from the general fund; even though it is not applied to his salary, it is paying for itself. If the message is not out there that illegal drug activity is being actively pursued, it will run rampant. They are very proud of the work Detective Root has done, and the way it has worked with Decatur police since they do not have to stop at the city limits.

Chair Snyder said he attended the Macon County Justice Council meeting, and he agrees with the sheriff that good things can be done especially if the cooperation continues.

NEW BUSINESS

Joe McGlaughlin said the Macon County Board of Review, the appointed body which reviews the assessor's evaluation of property, has become increasingly concerned with the effect blight and nuisance is having on some areas of our community. After reviewing the EEHW committee minutes, a new nuisance ordinance is being discussed by Mr. Boles. At some point, the board of review is probably going to send a letter requesting that attention be paid to this matter since they are seeing it expanded to the point where it is having a detrimental effect upon the tax base of the county. It does not only affect the property directly involved, but adjoining properties as well. It destroys value for the owner and the tax base for the county. While they are not looking for reasons to harass any citizens, pictures they have seen confirm the need for an ordinance with teeth.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 23, at 3:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Linda Little to adjourn, seconded by Dave Drobisch, and motion carried.

Minutes submitted by Linda Koger
Macon County Board Office